

# AmeriCorps Funding Crisis – Bulletin #2, June 24, 2003

## Severe Cuts Hitting AmeriCorps

Michigan's AmeriCorps is being devastated by 85 percent funding cuts that will begin September 1, 2003. Background information is provided at the end of this Bulletin.

## The National News

- Bill [S1276](#) was introduced and passed in the Senate and the House by Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. This Bill begins addressing the CNCS's accountability gaps that led to the sharp decrease in AmeriCorps funding. However, the Bill does not address the immediate AmeriCorps funding crisis. This Bill is currently waiting for President Bush's signature. Senator Mikulski, one of the originators of the Bill has sent a letter to President Bush encouraging him to sign.
- The following statement was issued by Office of the Press Secretary at the White House:

STATEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT: I commend Congress, particularly Senators Bond and Mikulski and Representatives Boehner and Hoekstra, for working with my Administration and taking swift action to pass the Strengthen AmeriCorps Program Act. The bill establishes accounting guidelines for the Corporation for National and Community Service that will help put AmeriCorps on a sound financial footing. It is also the essential first step toward maximizing enrollment this year to benefit the nonprofit organizations that count on AmeriCorps members to offer help and hope to people in communities across the country.

I hope Congress will continue to show strong support for my effort to help every American answer the call to volunteer service, and act quickly to strengthen and expand national service by passing the Citizen Service Act.

- A letter is being sent to President Bush from members of the U.S. House of Representatives asking for a supplemental appropriation to save AmeriCorps. As of 2:00 p.m. today (6/24/02) 143 members of Congress had signed the letter. The following members of Congress representing Michigan had signed the letter: Dale Kildee, Sander Levin, Carolyn Kilpatrick, and John Conyers.

## The Statewide News

- The Michigan Public Policy Institute, a program of the Michigan Nonprofit Association, continues to track the issue. For more information on the public policy ramifications, contact Erin Skene at [skeneeri@mnaonline.org](mailto:skeneeri@mnaonline.org).
- Michigan's AmeriCorps showed the power of volunteer service on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, at the [Russ Mawby Signature Service Project](#). Members built 4 Habitat homes and completed ten other service projects. At the event's press conference, state officials also discussed the 85 percent funding cuts for AmeriCorps and the negative impact they will have on Michigan. See Battle Creek Enquirer Story on June 22<sup>nd</sup> below or click on the above link for the full story.
- The following stories about Michigan's AmeriCorps funding cuts have been seen in the local media:

Battle Creek Enquirer – Sunday, June 22, 2003

<http://www.battlecreekenquirer.com/news/stories/20030622/neighbors/523786.html>

Lansing State Journal – Sunday, June 22, 2003

[http://www.lsj.com/news/local/030622\\_ameri corps\\_1b-2b.html](http://www.lsj.com/news/local/030622_ameri corps_1b-2b.html)

Petoskey News – Wednesday, June 18, 2003

[http://www.petoskeynews.com/articles/2003/06/18/news/local\\_regional/news07.txt](http://www.petoskeynews.com/articles/2003/06/18/news/local_regional/news07.txt)

Washington Post writer David Broder wrote a story challenging President Bush to act on this issue. It appeared in the Detroit Free Press on Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, in the Bay City Times on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, and in the Petoskey News on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **The Local Stories**

Are you concerned about the AmeriCorps funding cuts? Please tell us your story. Send an email message to [MCSC-News@michigan.gov](mailto:MCSC-News@michigan.gov).

### **Background Information**

Three issues are impacting Michigan's AmeriCorps programs:

1. Michigan's AmeriCorps program funding is being cut from \$6.2 million to \$900,000.
2. The balance in the Education Award Trust will not support President Bush's call for 75,000 members.
3. A cap has been placed on the number of AmeriCorps members who can enroll nationwide.

These issues are a result of accountability gaps on the part of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps funding, and the subsequent response of the U.S. Congress.